

HISTORIC COUNTRY SEAT SET ON FIRE

Home of Lord de L'Isle and
Dudley Damaged by Militant
Suffragettes.

LONDON AND DUBLIN, whose historic country seat of Penshurst, in Kent, near Tunbridge, was set on fire by the militant suffragettes last week, and so narrowly escaped total destruction, is the principal representative of the illustrious house of Sidney, which played so notable a role in the annals of Eng-

land. He has also in his veins the royal blood of England, his grandmother, Sophia, Lady Lisle and Dudley, having been a daughter of King William IV, and of the actress "Dolly Bland," whose real name was "Mrs. Jordan."

Lord De Lisle and Dudley is a soldier.

dier by profession, and a retired officer of the Rifle Brigade, a Conservative, the owner of about 15,000 acres of land in Kent and in Yorkshire, and was regarded as a confirmed bachelor until, after passing his fiftieth birthday, he married the clever and charming widow of William H. Astell, of Woodbury Hall, Bedfordshire.

Algernon Sidney, a retired officer of artillery. He too is a bachelor. And

Then comes another brother, the Hon. William Sidney, former Mayor of Chelsea, who is married and has two or three children, one of them a son. They are all Sidneys through the distant side of the house. For Elizabeth Sidney, daughter of Thomas Sidney, last representative in the male line.

line of the house, married William Perry, her daughter becoming the second wife of Sir Bysshe Shelley, of Castle Goring. The son by this marriage, John Shelley, succeeded, at the death of his mother, to her Sidney property, including Penshurst, assuming the name and armorial bearings of the Sidneys in accordance with the

terms of her will and by warrant of the crown. He was created a baronet, and his son, Philip Sidney, was raised to the peerage as Lord De Lisle and Dudley by William IV. in 1835, on marrying the latter's daughter, Lady Sophia Fitzclarence.

stronghold of importance, under the name of Pencester, in the time of Edward the Confessor, protected after the fashion of the age with moats and wooden palisades. The first Lord Pencester, or Penshurst, mentioned in English history lived in the time of Henry III. In the reign of Henry VI.

Penshurst was part of the estate of Humphrey the Good, Royal Duke of Gloucester. After his death it reverted to the crown, and was granted to the Staffords. Three Dukes of Buckingham dwelt there. Two died on the scaffold, and the third on the battlefield. And then Penshurst reverted to the crown, once more.

Edward VI. gave Penshurst, first of all, to Sir Ralph Fane, who was shortly afterwards executed as an accomplice of the Protector Somerset. Then King Edward granted it to Sir William Sidney, "his tutor and chamberlain." He had been one of the house-

hold of the young prince since his birth, and his wife, Lady Sidney, is said to have been the "governess of said Prince while in nurses' hands." Sir William was succeeded by his son, Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy and Governor-General of Ireland. His wife, Lady Mary Dudley, was a sister of the

ill-fated husband of Lady Jane Grey, some time Queen of England. Their son was Sir Philip Sidney, whose "Arcadia" was written at Penshurst, the picture of "Loconic" therein being a description of Penshurst and of its neighborhood.

favorite knight, remains in record as the English Bayard, without fear or reproach, "a very perfect, gentle knight, indeed, in hall, in tourney, or on the battlefield." A memorial has lately been erected by means of a public subscription (to which a number of people on this side of the Atlantic have contributed), on that battlefield

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